

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the previous amendments and the following remarks.

In view of the Official Action's objection to the disclosure because the first line of the specification does not contain the priority claim, Applicants respectfully submit that this application's priority has already been claimed. Specifically, the priority claim appears on both the Application Data Sheet and the Combined Declaration and Power of Attorney. There is no requirement that a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a) be set forth in the specification. Indeed, as noted in § 201.13(II)(A) of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, the claim for foreign priority need not take any special form. Furthermore, as set forth in 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.76(b)(5) and (6), foreign and domestic priority claims can be made in an Application Data Sheet. If the Examiner continues to have concerns on this point, the Examiner is kindly asked to identify the rule or statute specifying the noted requirement.

Claims 1, 3 and 9 are amended in a manner consistent with the Official Action's recommendation. Withdrawal of the rejections of Claims 1, 3 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph is therefore respectfully requested. Moreover, Claim 3 is not rejected under any other grounds and is therefore allowable by virtue of the above-discussed amendment.

Appreciation is expressed to Examiner Witczak for acknowledging that Claims 5, 7, 8, 12, 14-16 and 18 recite patentably distinguishing subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. By the present amendment, Claim 1 corresponds to Claim 8 rewritten in independent form, Claim 9 corresponds to Claim

12 rewritten in independent form, Claim 19 corresponds to Claim 14 rewritten in independent form, and Claim 20 corresponds to Claim 18 rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Claims 1, 9, 19 and 20 are allowable.

The dependent claims are all allowable by virtue of their dependency on an allowable independent claim. No further discussion of the dependent claims is needed at this time.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the pending claims are all allowable and the entire application is in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action with respect to this application is therefore respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise concerning this application, or should the Examiner believe a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: May 7, 2008

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